on Thursday. It was indeed stated that Staffordshire had been sold at 7*l.*; but the purchaser could not be ascertained. Now, the ground upon which a reduction in the Staffordshire is expected is the known superiority of the Shropshire pigs, till lately selling at 6*l.* 5s., and now at 6*l.* 10s. It is thought that the Staffordshire makers cannot maintain an equality of price with their Salopian neighbours.

At the monthly meeting of the Glasgow iron-masters, held the 16th inst., the price of pig iron was unanimously fixed at 6*l.* per ton, being 10s. advance on the price declared at the last monthly meeting. The term of credit was reduced from six to four months. A few parcels were sold for immediate cash at 95s. to 97s. 6d.

LORD PALMERSTON ON SHIP-BUILDING.

In a recent speech on the navy estimates, Lord Palmerston introduced the following remarks:—"The first thing to be looked to with regard to the navy was the possession of a number of efficient ships—efficient, not only in number, but in quality. He thought the discussion of thiseveniog had shewn, if any doubt existed before, the necessity and expediency of calling in the aid of science with regard to the construction of ships. It was very well for the gallant admiral opposite (Sir George Cockburn) to say that during the last war, although our ships were considered clumsy, and of an unscientific construction, yet that with those very ships our sailors overtook the enemy and defeated superior force. This, however, did not prove the ships to be good; it only proved that our sailors were so expert, enterprising, and skilful, that with inferior ships they could outsail superior ships, whose crews were less skilful, and that our seamen triumphed over the difficulties to which they were exposed. The French vessels that were taken were universally admitted to be far superior to the ships by which they had been overtaken and captured. Although that might be a fair reminiscence of former glories, it shewed rather the superiority of our sailors than the good qualities of the ships of that day. It was well known to all who had turned their minds to the subject, that there was no problem in science or in mathematics more difficult to solve than what is the best construction of a ship destined for the purposes of war. First of all, it was not easy for the most skilful mathematician to tell the form of a solid body which was best calculated to go rapidly through a fluid. It was not an easy matter to say what would be the floating-line of a ship. It was not easy to tell beforehand the construction which would give the greatest steadiness to a ship; nor was it easy to say where would be the centre of gravity, or where would be the centre of impulse in the rigging, the ascertainment of which was as necessary for the purposes of the ship as the adaptation of the hull to make its progress through the water. A practical man could not do this, for he could not tell on what principles of construction these qualities depended. The scientific man could tell beforehand what, upon scientific principles, would produce the desired qualities: but if not assisted by an able practical man, conversant with stowage, arrangement, and trim, the scientific man alone would not be able to give such information as would afford a good ground for building. Then it was said the Admiralty were making experiments; that they had employed one man to build two vessels, and another to build three or four; and that they were ready to attend to every suggestion which might be made. That, certainly, was very praiseworthy, and, as far as it went, it shewed a desire to improve the construction of ships of war; but, with all deference to the Admiralty, he did not think they were possessed of that scientific knowledge which was the only element on which the results ought to depend; and instead of being content with the costly experiment of building large ships by persons who were only scietific to a certain degree, and who did not possess the whole of that knowledge which was essential to the subject, it would be much better to procure the assistance of the most eminent scientific men in the country. By combining their knowledge with the experience of practical men an important progress would be made in building ships, which would then be so constructed as to be likely to answer the purpose for which they were intended. The class of steam-vessels required the particular attention of the Government, and, he believed, that a great improvement would take place in their construction. The right hon. baronet said that in this respect our naval force was at least upon a satisfactory footing, and that our horse-power, compared with that of our nearest neighbour, was in the ratio of three to two. He (Viscount Palmerston) did not consider that to be altogether a satisfactory statement, because a comparison of the horse-power did not apply to the question, for if two parties had an unequal number of vessels for the purpose of warfare in a narrow sea, the superiority of horse-power might not counterbalance that inequality of numbers.

Correspondence.

THE FIRE AT YORK MINSTER, &c.

Sir,—Having read with much pleasure the interesting article of Mr. James Wylson on the late fires at York Cathedral, in which he has introduced a brief account of the incendiary Jonathan Martin, I feel induced to trouble you with this letter, as I knew Martin very well, as almost every boy in York did. In the year 1829, just about the time of the first fire, I was a little boy at school at York, and frequently saw Martin, who was in the habit of hanging about the different schools and public places, to pick up what he could, either by selling the printed accounts of his dreams, or by ballads, threads, tapes, knives, combs, and other nicknacks of similar value. In my estimation, he was quite as much "a rogue as a fool," for he knew pretty well how to drive a bargain favourable to himself; he used often to pay the school a visit, and as he was good natured, and did not mind being pulled about by the boys, he was no unwelcome guest, especially if he had any little novelty in his basket to tickle their fancy with, although it might perchance tempt them to spend more of the "needful" than they otherwise would have done.

His usual dress was that of a poor mechanic, over which he wore a clumsy, thick, felty-looking great coat, with a large cape and turn-up collar, reaching almost up to his eyes; he generally had a grizzly beard of a day or two's growth, which, combined with his old slouching hat and rolling walk, gave him altogether a very eccentric appearance. He used to be a frequent attendant at the Minster, where I have often seen him stalking about, during the enviable half-holidays, when I used to go there, more perhaps to listen to the music than for any other purpose.

I have seen him in all parts of York, and under all circumstances, both sober and under the influence of Sir John Barleycorn, to whose exhilarating friendship he had no particular objection.

I saw the fire, and never shall I forget it, as it was one of inconceivable grandeur, not so much from the vast quantity of flame it produced, as from the variety of complexions it assumed during its progress; it was remarkable for the volumes of thick, white, steamy smoke that it emitted, in consequence of the large amount of water thrown into it acting on the partially consumed stone, which seemed to steam up like unslacked lime.

The Minster yard was deep in water, and the effect of the number of men ranged in rows, handing buckets of water from one to the other, to supply the engines in the interior of the building, was strikingly grand, at least so it appeared to my boyish imagination; and as most of the engines had to pass through the water to get to the building, the picturesque effect was increased by the firemen standing on their engines as they rushed through it in their rapid course, one in particular, which arrived late (I believe from Leeds), being drawn by four white horses. The engine from the Cavalry Barracks, just outside the city, was one of the earliest that came up, it passed me on my road there, in Coney-street, surrounded by the soldiers running full speed with it.

I saw Martin once or twice after his capture in York Castle, as from family connections I had access there. It is, I believe, well known that a few days before the fire, he was heard to state that there would soon be a great fire in York, but as nothing was suspected, of course no further notice was taken of what he said, as he was a chattering gossiping fellow, particularly if he could get a patient listener to swallow all he had to say about his dreams and visions and religious creeds.

I left York a very few weeks after the fire, and have never since had the pleasure to look upon the restored glory of my native city; since then the busy hand of improvement has been earnestly at work, and swept away many of the old land-marks of antiquity, which as a genuine son of the *Eboracenti*, I feel disposed to regret, notwithstanding all the advantages the improvements may introduce within the ancient walls of time-honoured York.

J. L.

TERRA COTTA.

Sir,—Can you tell me were terra-cotta is to be obtained? I think a church has lately been erected at Bolton-le-Moors, Lancashire, entirely with that material. If you, or any of your correspondents can inform me if such be the case, and if so who manufactured the terra-cotta, you will greatly oblige

Yours obediently,

A Constant Subscriber.

*** The new church at Lever Bridge, near Bolton-le-Moors, an elaborate structure in the Decorated style, with a spire of open tracery, is executed entirely of terra-cotta. Mr. E. Sharp, of Lancaster, the architect of the church, under whose superintendence the moulds were made, would probably give any information that might be required. Mr. Fletcher, of Vale-Bank, near the church, superinteoded the preparation of the clay and other processes for the terra-cotta, and has since established works, we believe, for the manufacture of it at Ladyshore, near Manchester. A correspondent informs us that parties are about to commence the manufacture of this material near London. —Ed.

INTERCOLUMNIATION.

Sir,—I have lately observed the term *intercolumn*, and *intercolumns*, frequently made use of instead of intercolumniation, and intercolumniations. Which is the more correct mode of expression? neither Hosking nor Gwilt gives the term intercolumn at all in his glossary; and yet in speaking numerically of the spaces between columns, it seems to me more accordant with the analogy of language to describe them as so many *intercolumns*; intercolumniation having a more general and collective meaning, implying rather the *mode of spacing* the columns than the actual spaces themselves. I have not the means of referring to Britton's "Dictionary of Architecture;" but if I mistake not, he points out the distinction to be observed between intercolumniation and intercolumn, and the authority of so careful a writer ought to be decisive.

This may seem a very trifling matter, yet it would be as well to have it settled either one way or the other, if only for the sake of uniformity. I am, Sir, &c.

Inquirer.

*** Gwilt, Hosking, Britton, and the "Oxford Glossary," call the clear space between two columns an intercolumniation, and do not give the word intercolumn. The propriety of using the latter term was urged, if we remember correctly, by an able writer in the "Civil Engineer's Journal;" at this moment, however, we cannot hit upon the passage.—Ed.

Pews.—At a meeting held last week at Ipswich, to consider and decide upon the best means to be adopted for affording additional accommodation in the church, the following resolution was carried with only three dissentients:—"That it is the opinion of this meeting that the pews in the church should be taken down, and open seats, all similar in plan and general outline to the one exhibited to this meeting, be placed in their stead." Mr. Fonnereau, the gentleman who proposed the above, offered a donation of 200*l.* towards the contemplated alterations.

London Mechanics' Institution.—A meeting will be held in the Lecture Theatre of this Institution, on Wednesday next, for the purpose of promoting the erection of a new reading-room, &c. The Earl of Radnor will take the chair at 12 o'clock precisely.

To learn about OCR and PDF Compression go to ThePaperlessOffice.org